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MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents of Local and Intermediate School Districts  
and Public School Academy Administrators

FROM: Pat Nichols, Deputy Director  
Curriculum Development and School Health Programs

SUBJECT: School Health Services Delivery

I am happy to share the Michigan School Health Services Report with you. This report reflects the findings of a survey that was sent to all local school building administrators in 1998. As a result of this survey, and the rapid growth in the implementation of school health services in Michigan schools, a School Health Services Workgroup was formed to explore ways to help district and building administrators in their decision-making related to providing additional health services to their students.

The workgroup, after much discussion, agreed that the attached document contains some basic information that school administrators need to have when deciding how to provide needed health services to students during school hours. Since the School Code presently does not address the delivery of health services to general education students, beyond the administration of medications, the attached document is for technical assistance only.

If you have questions, please call me at (517) 373-1486.

Attachment

## **SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES DELIVERY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **1. What is a “school nurse?”**

To be a “certified school nurse” in Michigan, one must demonstrate competencies in a wide range of areas including educating students regarding health promotion as well as providing direct health care services to students. The Administrative Rules of the Michigan Department of Education provide three levels of school nurse certification. Two of the certification levels, Standard School Nurse and Interim School Nurse, are temporary certifications provided to individuals working to gain the education and/or the experience required for the third and final certification level: “Professional Nurse Certification.” “Professional Nurse Certification” requires three years of successful experience as a school nurse and an appropriate baccalaureate degree. (See Appendix B in attached School Health Services Report.)

The Administrative Rules exempt public health nurses from certification. A public health nurse, defined as an individual with a baccalaureate degree in nursing or other health-related field with work experience in public health, is also qualified to work in school assignments, and may do so as part of their local health department nursing roles.

### **2. What is the first step in determining my school/district school health services needs?**

Take the time to assess the health related service needs of your students. (See Attachment A: Health Services Needs Assessment).

You may find, through the needs assessment, that you have situations in which health care services need to be provided to students in a safe and efficient manner. You may want to consider one or more of the several options available for provision of these services.

### **3. What are your school/district options to provide health related services?**

Whether interim or long-term, the following options may be available in your community:

- a. hiring a school nurse, full-time or part-time (possibly jointly with other districts, schools, or through your intermediate school district);
- b. contracting with a registered nurse either independently or through a health care provider, such as a hospital, to provide selected school health services;
- c. entering into an arrangement with your local health department for the provision of school nursing services;

- d. using district staff who are not school nurses (e.g., a health care aide, secretary, or teacher) by delegation from, and under the supervision of, a registered nurse or physician;
- e. using district staff who are not school nurses (e.g., a health care aide, secretary, or teacher) by delegation from, and under the supervision of, the school administrator to deliver basic services.

For help in defining the level of services needed by your school/district, please see Attachment B: Levels of School Health Services chart.

**4. What are some of the considerations that your school/district should consider in choosing from the options noted above?**

Note: Employing a professional school nurse, full or part-time, is generally the most effective option administratively, presents minimal risks, and provides the greatest assurance the person will be qualified with regard to student health issues both educationally and as a direct service provider.

If due to the lack of an acceptable candidate, perceived limited financial resources, or limited needs as demonstrated by your Student Health Needs Assessment findings, hiring a board-employed school nurse is not feasible, you should consider the following:

- a. any non-health professional school employee who is expected to deliver health services to students as part of their duties should have training in the procedures to be done for students. This training should be done by a health professional.
- b. your local union contract for professional and non-professional staff may contain language which might apply to these situations, e.g., who may provide health care services, the use of volunteers, or conditions on a district contracting with outside persons. The districts's insurance coverage should also be checked, particularly regarding exclusions for "medical" or similar services.
- c. if you contract with a registered nurse, he/she must operate within his/her "scope of practice." For a nurse in a school this depends upon the nurse having the necessary knowledge of child health and illness, what his/her role will be in the school setting, and the scope of services to be delivered in the school.
- d. any non-school nurse or para-professional health service provider who is contracted from an outside agency, whether as an agency employee or volunteer, needs to have the parameters of his/her job-related duties in the school setting clearly and carefully spelled out in writing. This agreement needs to be cooperatively developed by the appropriate school administrator(s) and agency personnel.

- e. any non-school nurse or para-professional health service provider who is contracted from an outside agency, whether as a volunteer or agency employee, needs supervision emanating from the agency that will be responsible for covering liability. Supervisory practices and delegation practices should be agreed upon by both the outside agency and appropriate school administration personnel.
- f. any non-school nurse or para-professional health service provider who is contracted from an outside agency, whether as a volunteer or agency employee, and a school nurse employed for the first time in this position, will need formal inservice related to school laws, procedures, and protocols. These should include, but may not be limited to: confidentiality of student records, confidentiality in regard to information that a student may give to the nurse, special education and Section 504 procedures and processes.

## STUDENT HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Please complete this needs assessment in cooperation with your teaching and secretarial staff for greatest accuracy.

Please check all of the types of health services that are required by your **general education** student population on a regular basis or are services that are needed to support the health and well-being of students and staff.

### EMERGENCY FIRST AID

- \_\_\_\_\_ emergency first aid for injuries and illness
- \_\_\_\_\_ crisis intervention team member
- \_\_\_\_\_ provision of first aid and/or CPR training for designated school employees
- \_\_\_\_\_ provision of bloodborne pathogen and universal precautions training for school employees

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

- \_\_\_\_\_ communicable disease prevention and control (head lice, scabies, hepatitis, chicken pox) which includes administration of control measures such as head checks, communication with parents and school staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ immunization status assessment when student registers, follow-up on immunizations regarding student needs

### CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- \_\_\_\_\_ medication administration
- \_\_\_\_\_ provision of training for staff assigned to administer medications
- \_\_\_\_\_ administration, or supervision, of students doing medical procedures such as breathing treatments, blood glucose monitoring
- \_\_\_\_\_ training of non-health professional staff in medical procedures such as catheterization, tube feeding
- \_\_\_\_\_ case management of students with chronic disease conditions which includes communication with family and physician, interpretation of student condition to school staff, planning for care in school setting
- \_\_\_\_\_ making home visits, as necessary, to coordinate home-school care of students with chronic disease conditions

## HEALTH PROMOTION

- \_\_\_\_\_ assist in the development of school/district health policies and procedures; and advise and educate administrators, staff and families on school health-related matters
- \_\_\_\_\_ do health counseling with students upon referral by staff, and refer students and families to community resources where needed
- \_\_\_\_\_ coordinate hearing and vision screening, make referrals and follow-up with families and school staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ act as a resource in health education classroom
- \_\_\_\_\_ represent the school on the local sex education advisory committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ represent the school on any community health-related committees which target school-aged children

## SAFETY OF STUDENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_ assess and advise school administrator on environmental conditions that are unsafe or hazardous to health
- \_\_\_\_\_ provide documentation and evaluation in cases of suspected child abuse and neglect
- \_\_\_\_\_ assist administrator and other support staff in identifying substance abuse, or potentially violent behavior in students, and refer students and families to appropriate school or community resource

## LEVELS OF SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

### Level 1

Basic Procedures	Population Served	Practice Boundaries	Training Needed	Supervision Required	Please Note
Basic first aid, medication administration and head lice checks	Classroom screenings or individual student care	Follows procedures developed by the local school or health department and the American Red Cross  Follows the School Code (Sec. 1178) regarding administration of medications	Yes  CPR and first aid  Training in procedures used for medication administration and head lice checks	Supervised by building administration, and school nurse or contracted registered nurse  Working under physician order for medication administration	Volunteers and non-nursing personnel must be trained in school district policies regarding confidentiality and emergency procedures.

### Level 2

Expanded Services	Population Served	Independence of Practice	Training Needed	Supervision Required	Please Note
Follows protocols and procedures developed by a registered nurse or physician for medical services to students, Makes referrals to appropriate school personnel who communicate with parents  Health promotion activities, Classroom resource speaker, Staff wellness activities, Health curriculum development, Suggesting referrals to appropriate school personnel	General education student population - focus is on the well child	Role is dependent on delegated authority of a registered nurse or a physician for medical care procedures and the school administrator for other duties.	Yes  Level and extent of training dependent on duties assigned  Training in state law pertaining to health services to students, local school policies and procedures, FERPA (confidentiality) approved referral sources, etc., as needed	Ideally supervised by a school nurse or registered nurse, Supervision also given by school administrator  Works under physician orders regarding medical procedures	Non-nursing staff and/or nurse volunteers need training to teach staff and/or students about topics such as diabetes, asthma, or severe allergies  This training should be done by a certified school nurse or licensed health care professional.  Non-nursing staff will require a registered nurse or physician on site for certain wellness activities such as cholesterol screening, flu vaccines, immunizations, etc.

### Level 3

Comprehensive Services	Population Served	Independence of Practice	Training Needed	Supervision Required	Please Note
All school nursing functions as defined in Administrative Rules	General education students	Dependent on level of school nurse certification, prior experience, and/or contract stipulations on practice	<p>Registered nurse is required for this level of services. Training for new school nurses and/or contracted registered nurses is necessary.</p> <p>Training in state law pertaining to health services to students, local school policies and procedures, FERPA (confidentiality) approved referral sources, etc.)</p>	<p>School nurse supervised by school administrator, Contracted registered nurse supervised by employing agency and school administrator</p> <p>Works under physician orders regarding medical services.</p>	<p>Registered nurse, as a professional, is responsible for knowing his/her appropriate scope of practice.</p> <p>In addition, serious discussion should take place before non-certified school nurses take part in Level 3 activities.</p>